

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. The Central Inspectorate of Waterways (Tsentralnaya Inspektziya Vnutrennikh Vodnykh Putey) was a central directorate of the Ministry of the River Fleet, subordinate to the MRF minister through his Deputy Minister for General Administration. This inspectorate was responsible for the enforcement of safety regulations and the supervision of accident preventive service within the Ministry of the River Fleet. The Regional Inspectorates of Waterways (Lineynyye Inspektzii Vnutrennikh Vodnykh Putey) were field agencies of the central inspectorate and were located in all larger river ports.
2. Twenty-five to 30 employees worked in the Central Inspectorate of Waterways; their main tasks were as follows:
 - a. Providing vessels with, and the control of, the following documents:
 - (1) Certified register of personnel employed on each particular vessel.
 - (2) Certificate of home port. Every vessel was assigned to some particular port, which was then considered its "home port" (port priipiski).

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- b. Control over vessel diaries (sudovyykh zhurnalov). These documents were issued to vessels by their parent steamship companies. The Central Inspectorate of Waterways, however, through its respective regional inspectorates, had the right to check the entries made in these diaries. There were four types of vessel diaries, a deck diary, an engine diary, an electrical-equipment diary, and a radio equipment diary (palubnyy zhurnal, mashinnyy zhurnal, zhurnal elektricheskogo oborudovaniya, and radio-zhurnal). These were working diaries wherein all pertinent operational data was entered at the end of each watch.
- c. Providing outbound vessels with a written authorization to leave port (issued to the vessels or crews to dokhods). Such a document was issued each time the vessel left port; it presupposed a complete inspection by port authorities of the sanitary provisions, fire-fighting equipment, and crew accident preventive service of the respective vessel. Often, however, this document was issued without any inspection by the port authorities.
- d. Investigation of river accidents.
- (1) In case of an accident the normal procedure was as follows. The skipper of any ship involved in an accident immediately wrote a detailed report of the accident and at the same time made a corresponding entry in the ship's diary. As soon as the damaged vessel reached the first port, representatives of the vessel's home office started a detailed investigation. Representatives of the Regional Inspectorate of Waterways always participated in this investigation. In cases where there was damage to the vessel's hull or machinery, representatives of the Regional Inspectorate of River Register also participated. When there was dissension as to the cause of, and/or responsibility for, the accident, the opinion of the Regional Inspectorate of Waterways was normally given credence. In very serious and complicated cases, the entire matter might be forwarded to the Central Inspectorate of Waterways; its opinion was considered final. In 95% of the cases, however, the Central Inspectorate of Waterways would accept the opinion of its field agency.
 - (2) The most common accident in the river fleet was for vessels to run aground ("postanovka na mel'"). If there was no damage to the vessel, or if the damage did not exceed the monthly wage of the responsible person, the damage was paid by this person, according to the provisions of paragraph 81 of the USSR Labor Code, i.e., withholding one-third of his salary until the cost of the damage was met. In addition, the person responsible for the accident was normally demoted in rank and punished by 10-30 days in confinement.
 - (3) Accidents resulting in serious damage were treated before responsible courts in accordance with provisions of paragraph 59 of the USSR Criminal Code. Punishment as prescribed by law was from 1 to 25 years of hard labor. The normal sentence given by courts for accidents causing 3,000, or under, rubles of damage was three to five years of hard labor. Accidents causing the loss of cargo or lives of the crew drew the highest penalty, 25 years. Sentences, however, depended very much on the attitude of the director of the respective steamship company. Since there was always a shortage of navigation personnel, especially skippers, it often occurred that the steamship company director defended his skipper --- not because he sympathized with the man, but in order to keep him on the job. The bribery of regional inspectorate of river register and waterways representatives was the most common and successful way to whitewash the defendant.

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- e. Supply of vessels with navigation equipment and instruments (hydrographical manuals of individual rivers, maps, logs, sea gauges, signal equipment).
- f. Practical instruction of river navigation personnel in the operation of river vessels. All regional inspectorates of waterways had "captain-instructors" (kapitan-nastavnik) whose task was to familiarize and to instruct ship personnel with the character of the rivers, canals, and banks, as well as in the practical methods of piloting. This instruction was done partly in the ports; at other times the "captain-instructor" accompanied the ship on its trips. Barge skippers were also trained in the ports by "captain-instructors"; special attention was paid to familiarizing barge skippers with the loading and unloading procedures of the river fleet. In addition, each regional inspectorate of waterways had instructors for mechanics and stokers.
- g. Publication of manuals dealing with the technical exploitation of river vessels and river vessel machinery, and river navigation (pravil plavaniya). There were approximately eight volumes of River Vessel Technical Exploitation Manuals and one volume of the River Navigation Manual in the MRF.

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